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# U.S. AND EGYPTIANS CONSIDER AIRLIFT OF ARMS TO SUDAN

Official Confirms That Libyan  
Jet Made Bombing Attack  
That Killed 5 on Friday

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WASHINGTON, March 17 — The United States and Egypt are considering an emergency airlift of military equipment to the Sudan because of a bombing attack on Omdurman, the Sudan's main city, on Friday, Administration officials said today.

A senior Administration official said today that there was no doubt the bombing attack, which killed five people, was carried out by a Libyan Air Force TU-22 based at an airfield in Kufra, Libya. On Friday, President Gaafar al-Nimeiry of the Sudan accused Libya of the attack but the State Department was unable to confirm his charge then.

## What the Sudan Wants Most

The Sudan has made several requests for more American military help. The requests now have high priority, and officials from the State Department, Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency were working this weekend to come up with recommendations for the National Security Council.

The chief Sudanese request, an official said, is for advanced air defense equipment that can be used quickly. Such equipment could be sent from Egypt, which has a military agreement with the Sudan, or from the United States. During an outbreak of Libyan-backed fighting in Chad last summer, the United States sent some Stinger shoulder-fired antiaircraft missiles to help the French-backed Chad Government.

The entry of Libya into the efforts to

overthrow the Nimeiry Government has posed a new problem for the United States, which has warned Libya against trying to subvert its neighbors. In February 1983, the United States sent four Awacs surveillance planes to Egypt and moved the aircraft carrier Nimitz closer to the Libyan coast after it learned of Libyan plans to attack Khartoum by air and support a coup attempt.

This month, officials said, Libya announced its support for separatist elements in the southern Sudan who were already receiving help from Ethiopia.

Because of the growing insurgency, a revival of the 17-year civil war that ended in 1972, Vice President Omar Mohammed el-Tayeb of the Sudan flew to Washington this month to argue the case for receiving more American military help quickly. Vernon A. Walters, the special roving Ambassador, then visited the Sudan to assess the situation.

An interagency group was studying what to do when the Libyan attack increased the urgency of the task.

A State Department official said that although the Administration was determined not to appear to acquiesce in aggression by Libya, it was wary of being drawn into Sudanese civil strife caused by longstanding political, ethnic and religious differences.

The rebellion in the largely Christian and pagan areas of the south against the Moslem Government in the north began again after President Nimeiry announced last September that he was imposing Islamic law throughout the country and had decided to divide the southern area into different provinces, reducing the political power of some of the southern tribes.

"We have made it clear to Nimeiry that any help we give him will only be to cut down on externally inspired subversion, such as air attacks from outside or the flow of arms to the rebels from outside," a State Department official said. "We believe the civil war should be settled by negotiations by the parties themselves, and Nimeiry knows this and made a speech about this two weeks ago."

The Egyptians, who view the Libya as a major threat to them and the region, have moved quickly. Defense Minister Abdel Halim Abu Ghazala of Egypt flew to Khartoum on Friday, soon after the attack, to consult with Mr. Nimeiry, and the Egyptians are pressing the case, officials said, for an American show of support for the Sudanese.

The American military aid program for the Sudan is relatively modest by

Middle East standards. There is currently \$52 million available in foreign military sales credits to the Sudanese. The Americans are supplying F-5 fighter planes to the Sudan, but only two have been delivered.

Washington is expected to let Egypt transfer some American-supplied equipment to the Sudan and to send a Redeye missile, an earlier version of the Stinger, to the Sudan. This will be accompanied, some officials predicted, by more public and private warnings to Libya, which is still active in Chad.